



Bethel Public Schools

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Testimony Related to:

S.B. No. 916
S.B. No. 928
H.B. No. 6321

Testimony Provided to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

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The following is an outline of the district administrators' comment based upon their experiences working with the state university system in the areas of college remediation, high school preparation for college, and teacher preparation:

S.B. No. 916

1. Identified need for remediation for college freshmen

- A. Poor student performance identified in writing and math
- B. The development of the Bethel, Danbury, WCSU "Bridges Model"
 - 1) Install Junior testing using "Accu-Placer" in February as a "status check"
 - 2) Use of testing results with students as a follow up
 - 3) High School/university dialog and collaboration on student results/skills/curricula
 - 4) Retesting using the "Accu-Placer" in the senior year
 - 5) Results
 - a. Cost savings in remediation for all parties
 - b. High school/university collaboration
 - c. Middle school coursework/university student remediation for BMS children
 - d. Introduction of a middle School science fair

"Our Primary Purpose is to Improve Student Achievement."

- e. Summer enhancement opportunities at the university for at-risk children
- f. Math/science/ enhancement opportunities for middle and high children

C. Unanticipated consequences – S.B. No. 928

- 1) “Your kids teach our kids.”
- 2) Raising concerns about teacher preparation
- 3) Meeting with the WCSU Education Department
- 4) Creating a 2-week observation/seminar experience for teacher candidates done by practitioners.

D. Obtaining feedback on Connecticut Teacher Prep

- 1) One district’s strategic decision on hiring
- 2) Focus Groups response
- 3) Principal response
- 4) The academic literature
- 5) The need for a “residency” model of teacher development

Legislative Considerations:

Have one (1) university system with a clearly defined strategic mission in the area of teacher development. Performance of university graduates should be tracked and reported to the university.

Streamline decision making for the state universities and the State Department in the areas of certification and program accreditation. Impose a “time certain” timeline for certification and accreditation decisions between the governing bodies. Clarify who makes certification/accreditation decisions.

Allow universities and community colleges to develop areas of expertise so there is less political infighting. Provide more community college coursework in high school classrooms.

Increase grade point averages for acceptance into teacher education programs. Make teacher preparatory programs 5 years including multiple targeted residency experiences .

Increase academic expectations and course work for teacher candidates in the areas of reading, math, and science instruction.

Incentivize universities to work with school districts. Start by creating “State University Districts” to which all public high schools are assigned for communication, collaboration, and accountability purposes.

Require that state universities and community colleges provide up to 3 courses to eligible high school junior and senior students at a discount as a cost effective and efficient way to improve the transition process to high education.

Require HS juniors to take college placement exams in March as a proven strategy to cut down on remediation programs currently required at the college level. Hold high schools accountable for cost of remediation tuitions. Such testing might be structured to replace the CAPT.